



**SAINT JAMES THE FISHERMAN EPISCOPAL CHURCH**

**OCTOBER 21, 2020**

**ZOOM CONFERENCE**

**VESTRY MINUTES**

**PRESENT**

**Father Farrell Graves  
Ron Stephens, Sr. Warden  
Tom Fernandez, Jr. Warden  
Bill Chase  
Nancy Dougherty  
Gary Freeman  
Heather Holbrook  
Bob Lynott  
Earl Miller  
Anne Neely**

**Deacon Mike Ligon  
Deacon Jean Miller  
Sheila Jordan, Treasurer  
Toni DeLuca, Vestry Clerk**

**ABSENT**

**Ruth MacDonald, Treasurer**

- 1. Call to Order, Father Farrell**  
Nine members were present for the Vestry Zoom conference meeting and called to order at 4:00 by Father Farrell.
- 2. Opening Prayer, Anne Neely**  
Opening prayer was provided by Anne Neely. Bob Lynott volunteered to provide the opening prayer for the next Vestry meeting.
- 3. Approval of September 16, 2020 Vestry Meeting Minutes, Vestry**  
Father Farrell asked if there were any questions about the September 16, 2020 Vestry minutes. There were no questions regarding the minutes.

***Motion: Nancy Dougherty made a motion to approve the September 16, 2020 Vestry minutes, which was unanimously approved by the Vestry.***

4. **Rector's Report, Father Farrell**

Father Farrell returned from his vacation and completed seventy-five percent of his lawn projects. He attended the Zoom Clergy Conference for one full day from 9:00 – 5:00. The conference is usually three days but this year it was condensed to one full day. The speaker was good. Bishop Skirving is concerned about the clergy. The clergy was greatly appreciative of his caring and attempts to assist them during these challenging times. Deacon Mike thought the first speaker was good.

Father Farrell asked if the Boy's Scouts ever used Saint James the Fisherman property for any activities. The Vestry said no to the property being used by the Scouts.

Father Farrell asked if the Vestry had any questions for him and the Vestry did not have any questions.

5. **Treasurers' Reports (September 2020), Sheila Jordan and Ruth MacDonald**

Ruth was not present for the meeting and Sheila presented the treasurers' report to the Vestry. The treasurers' reports were forwarded to the Vestry members prior to the meeting for their review. The September financial documents and reports are attached to the minutes.

**Treasurers' Report/Comments**

**Balance Sheet**

- The Raymond James account had a gain of \$4,315.62 this month.
- The Edward Jones account had a gain of \$195.84.

**Income and Expense Statement**

- The September income was down significantly, but overall pledges for the year are down \$9,500.
- The third quarter statements have been mailed to the parishioners. The statements should be received by the end of October.
- There was not a parking expense, which was discussed at the last month Vestry meeting.

**Additional Treasurer Comments from Sheila**

- September income was not good but the first three Sundays of October have been better.
- Couple of people had prepaid and was not caught last year. So they will be on a separate account.

Father Farrell asked Sheila to further elaborate and provide the Vestry with a brief summary.

- Sheila said that if you take out the PPP loan line, we are not as strong on income as we should be, \$ 9,500 off. We are catching up and will be over on our next amount.
- Plate collections are down.
- Our expenses are down but better than last month. David Brownfield, Administrative Assistant, has done a good job of monitoring the heat.

**Vestry Questions/Comments**

As we get closer to the end of the year, is there a way to get expenses where they were in January. (Example such as the choir money)

Sheila responded that there are not many in the wrong accounts. We need to remember that we were using the old system and the new system is more accurate.

Ron thanked Sheila for all her hard work and diligence.

*Motion: Gary Freeman moved that the Treasurers' Report be entered into the minutes as presented, which was unanimously approved by the Vestry.*

6. **Wardens' Reports, Ron Stephens, Tom Fernandez**

A. **Junior Warden, Tom Fernandez**

- Tom has been in contact with Back to Normal to complete the work at the church.
- The painter is ready to begin painting.
- Parking lot will be discussed by Ron Stephens. Tom hopes we can get more parking.
- Tom will leave his report in Ron's mailbox.

Ron thanked Tom for dealing with the workers to ensure that the work is completed properly.

B. **Senior Warden, Ron Stephens**

- PPP Loan Forgiveness Application to Live Oak Bank. Ron has communicated with the bank about the loan but has not heard from the Small Business Administration. The application was forwarded to the SBA on September 9, 2020. They have 90 days to reply. The first payment is due December 5<sup>th</sup>.

**After the Wednesday Vestry meeting Ron received the following email from the Live Oak Bank and forwarded the email to the Vestry for their review. It was well received by the Vestry.**

**Good News for Saint James the Fisherman:** (Received Wednesday evening from the bank.) Live Oak Bank had completed the review of the PPP Forgiveness application for Saint James the Fisherman Episcopal Church and the Live Oak's Lender Decision is Approved in Full. Your Loan Amount Forgiven is anticipated to be \$19,800.00 less any \* EIDL advance received. Your Loan Amount To Be Repaid is anticipated to be \$0.00 plus and \* EIDL advance received. \*EIDL Economic Injury Disaster Loan

**Please Note:** According to SBA guidance, businesses who received an EIDL Advance in addition to the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loan will have the amount of the EIDL Advance subtracted from the forgiveness amount of their PPP loan during SBA Review.

**Next Steps**

Saint James will receive a DocuSign package within a few weeks with details on your PPP Forgiveness application. Once you have executed this DocuSign package, Live Oak will submit your application to the SBA for final determination and forgiveness.

According to SBA guidance, Saint James has up to 90 days from the date that Live Oak Bank submits your expected PPP Forgiveness application to provide SBA final PPP Forgiveness decision to Live Oak. The bank will notify you by email of the SBA's final decision and forward the final agreement to be executed via DocuSign.

- **Vestry Elections for 2021.** For discussion, Ron presented the Vestry application and “Responsibilities of being a Vestry member”. (He reviewed what Nancy Dougherty had done last year and did further research on Vestry responsibilities.) Ron asked the Vestry to give permission to include with the application, the Vestry responsibilities information. The Vestry gave approval and Ron will send to the parish members for them to apply. Nancy Dougherty thanked Ron for doing an excellent job. A few people have contacted Ron with an interest in being on the Vestry. The due date for the application response should be before the Annual Church Meeting.

**Discussion of Annual Parrish Meeting Date**

- Can the meeting be at a later date than the first Sunday in December?
- The first Sunday in December is December 6<sup>th</sup>.
- An extra week would be helpful with stewardship pledges.
- Father Farrell said the meeting date can be any time of the year. Does Saint James have a date that is to be the Annual Meeting? Father Farrell will check with the Diocese.

Father Farrell sent an email to the Vestry stating the following information he received from the Diocese.

- The Diocesan Canons (3.1) state that the Vestry can change the date of the annual meeting from the first Sunday of Advent. According to national Canons, Saint James must let the parish know the date at least three weeks in advance.
- Canon 3: Parish Meetings. Section 1. Annual Meeting. The Vestry shall call for an annual meeting of the communicants of the parish. The annual meeting shall occur on the first Sunday of Advent unless the Vestry designates another date. The annual meeting shall conduct Vestry elections, hear reports from the Rector, the Wardens and each parish committee and organization, and discuss other matters of interest to the congregation. Motions, resolutions, elections and all other matters presented to a parish meeting for vote shall be decided by vote of the qualified members present and voting.
- Father Farrell suggested that the Vestry shift the annual meeting from the first Sunday of Advent to the first Sunday of December. The Vestry can then have an online vote if there are no objections.

***Motion: Ron Stephens made a motion for the Annual Church Meeting, if permissible, the meeting be the first Sunday in December, which was unanimously passed by the Vestry.***

After further discussion via email, the Vestry made another motion regarding the Annual Church Meeting.

***Motion: Bob Lynott made a motion for the Annual Church Meeting be the second Sunday in December, which was approved by the Vestry.***

- **Parking Agreement.** Saint James reached an agreement with Living River Church. Reverend Christian Williams has agreed to allow access to the bank parking lot and Powell Street parking lot for Wednesday needs, Saturday 5:30 PM service, and Sunday 8:00 AM service. In addition, we have access to Powell Street lot parking only for Sunday 10:00 AM service. There will be no charge for the parking. Living River Church services are Thursday at 7:00 PM, Sunday at 9:30 AM and 11:15 AM. Reverend Williams was very gracious.

Parking for the 10:00 service will be an issue and concern.

Ron is continuing to research the parking situation; Main Street, Powell Street and other parking options. He has reached out to Wayne Campbell, parishioner/architect, to review with him the work Wayne has already done for upgrading Main Street parking. Ron welcomes any suggestions from the Vestry about the parking situation.

- **Comments from the Vestry regarding Living River Church**
  - How many people are attending Living River Church? Father Farrell thinks there are 140 people
  - The LRC has not received their certificate of occupancy.
  - LRC has a very large sign in the parking lot and cleaned up the property.
  - Father Farrell said that LRC met twice at Saint James. He has not offered the church again.
- Annual Convention will be held virtually for one day, February 13, 2021. Attendees will need to use technology i.e. Zoom and smart phones.
- The [www.thelordsfoodpantry.com](http://www.thelordsfoodpantry.com) had an article featuring Saint James in this month's newsletter. The Vestry thanks Ruth Ann Campbell and SBIC for providing this opportunity for Saint James.
- Ron, Fr. Farrell and David met with the Fire Marshall to determine the maximum occupancy for the Nave and Bliss Hall. The Nave has 140 capacity and Bliss Hall has 120 capacity. The church is allowed 30% of capacity when the church reopens.

Father Farrell said most people come in 1 – 2 people, not large groups.

## 7. Continuing Business

### A. Update, PPP Loan, Ron Stephens

This was discussed under Senior Warden's Report, bullet number 1.

### B. Parish Survey, Heather Holbrook

The survey results remain the same. The October parish newsletter reported we would be sharing the survey results with the parish. Heather asked the Vestry how the survey results should be conveyed to the parish members. *Does the Vestry want to inform them via an email or to be included in the parish newsletter? It was decided to inform the members by the parish newsletter. How should the survey summary/results be written in the newsletter?*

### **Vestry Comments/Suggestions**

- The summary should be written so the members can easily understand the results.
- The summary should mention the variety of member responses.
- When Father Farrell sends out a letter to the parish, he should remind people to read the newsletter's comments about the parish survey.

Heather will forward to Peter T. something to write in the newsletter. She will review with Ron prior to sending.

#### **C. Mailbox, Father Farrell**

The mailbox has arrived and is ready for installation on Main Street. David Brownfield will contact the Shallotte Postmaster General to cancel the PO Box and forwarded change of address. It is important that the mailbox is installed on Saint James the Fisherman property.

#### **D. Opening the Church, Father Farrell**

The Vestry had an extensive discussion about opening the church to services. Parishioners eagerly want to return to Saint James, they miss communion and the camaraderie of church life. Saint James is a social parish, but the realization is that hugging and the normal socializing will need to be discouraged to ensure the well being of the parish members and clergy.

#### ***Vestry Comments about the return to services.***

- The members need to be made aware that the church environment will be different and that times are challenging for everyone.
- There is the concern about the parking lot and parking for Sunday service.
- Receiving communion one at a time will be challenging.
- Has the reservation system been vetted? Would Dan Bartell help us with the reservation process? Father Farrell will contact Dan.
- The Altar Guild, ushers and lectors, who participate in the service, will need to be involved in the process. The ushers will need to be fully involved because of the seating arrangements and schedules. Father Farrell has a document for them to reference to assist them. It is important that everyone be aware of their participation and their willingness to do the various arrangements.
- The ushers need to be fully prepared to ensure that parish members are doing what they should be doing. This is a great responsibility for them and they should be willing to take on these responsibilities.
- It is Father Farrell's decision to open the church but he wants the Vestry to be part of the decision making.
- The opening needs to be well structured and organized. Maybe a dress rehearsal should be conducted prior to the opening, to ensure that it goes smoothly for the first day.
- There are so many things to be considered to ensure the safety of everyone; parishioners, lectors, ushers and clergy.
- Should something be written in the newsletter?
- The Vestry looked at a variety of options to opening for services. It was the consensus that Saint James will begin with one service and go from there.
- The organist is available for the 10:15 AM service.

- Will the organist be available for the 9:00 AM Zoom service?

Father Farrell will send an email and letter explaining the reopening procedure. It is important that the email and letter clearly states that it was the collaborative decision of the clergy and Vestry.

***Church Participation and Service guidelines.***

- The church is allowed to have indoor worship with 30% of the church maximum capacity as set by the fire marshal. Thirty-nine parishioners, plus two clergy and a musician may worship. What about the Verger?
- In person 10:15 AM worship service will be the first Sunday of Advent (November 29), the beginning of the liturgical year.
- Should the number of people seeking to worship at the 10:15 service exceed the number permitted by fifteen or more, Saint James will add a second in person service. The goal is to accommodate all people who want to participate.
- Masks and physical distancing will be required. There will be no handshakes, no singing, no hugs and no coffee hour. The organist will provide music but no choir.
- Reservations will be required.
- To honor the needs of parish members deciding to remain at home, Saint James will continue an online service of Morning Prayer at 9:00.

**8. New Business**

**A. Parking Agreement, Ron Stephens**

This was discussed under the Senior Warden's Report, bullet number three.

**B. 2021 Operating Budget Planning, Ron Stephens & Sheila Jordan**

The Budget Planning Report was forwarded to the Vestry members prior to the meeting for their review. Ron reviewed the budget line by line and encouraged participating of the Vestry in the discussion of the budget. Vestry members made the following recommendations:

- Line 4021 Current pledges were too high and decreased to \$200,000.
- Line 4027 Plate Collection was too high and reduced to \$17,500.
- Line 4154 Weight Watchers for 2021 will not be returning.
- Lines 5270 Rector Life Insurance, 5276 Rector Medical/Dental Insurance may need to be raised and added together—Sheila will check and let Ron know
- Line 5310 Workman's Compensation increase to \$600.
- Line 5432 Accounting System, annual lease payment
- Line 5450 Telephone/Internet. Increase because of internet upgrade in Bliss Hall
- Remove from the budget
  - Line 4158 Food Card (one time deal)
  - Line 4240 Flowers. Money comes out of worship.
  - Lines 5256, 5257 Rector and Deacon's Continuing Education
  - Line 6453 Acolytes. Have not received requests.
  - Line 6455 Christian Education. No requests for Sunday School or Adults
  - Line 6482 Parish Dinners.
- Line 5720 Custodial Services. Ron to review supply cost with David. Will need disinfectants.
- Line 5805, 5810 Grounds & Landscaping. Could cut in half and make some adjustments.

- Line 6457 Diocesan Convention. 4 delegates, 3 clergy @ \$190 each last year. Not sure of the cost for the one day only Zoom Convention planned for Feb. 13<sup>th</sup>, 2021.
- Line 6551 Maintenance Cont. Reduce to \$10,000
- Line 6552 Sabbatical Cont. \$60 per month. Accruing for Father Farrell's sabbatical
- Line 5065 Supply Priests. You can not eliminate the Supply Priests. The Diocesan does not allow for a Deacon's mass, but the Deacons can do a Morning Prayer.
- Line 6015 Diocesan Pledge. Leave as listed in the 2021 proposed budget.

Bob Lynott said half the pledges have been submitted by the parish members. We were hurt by not having Commitment Sunday.

#### C. Needs and Wants for 2021 Budget Discussion, Ron Stephens

Ron reviewed with the Vestry the Saint James the Fisherman Episcopal Church Needs and Wants List. The Vestry agreed that the safety and maintenance issues take priority at this time.

- Protective and stain glass over the transom window are broken and needs to be repaired. It will cost about \$300.
- The removal of the tall pine trees by the shed and Bliss Hall can wait until next year.
- The replacement of the kitchen air conditioner can be placed on hold.
- The cemetery driveway access can be folded into the Powell Street parking.
- Tom Fernandez will take care of the mold abatement over the Powell Street entrance.
- Power washing of the church can be placed on hold.
- A parish member volunteered labor for the repair of the Arbor in the cemetery.
- The parking situation is very important and needs to be addressed. The church has one bid and will need additional bids. Ron will contact the city and permits will be needed. He has contacted Wayne Campbell, parishioner and architect. The Vestry gave Ron permission to move forward on the parking situation. Parking is priority.
- The coat closet latch was repaired by Tom Fernandez.
- The funding for Sunday school has been placed on hold.
- Ice maker for the kitchen is not a priority at this time.
- The nursery window and office hall window seal needs to be replaced but can be put on hold for now.
- The beautification project is to be placed on hold until the parking situation is addressed. There is still the \$30,000 allocated for the project. It was suggested that the parking project will include beautification.
- Tom Fernandez asked about the Main Street signage. Did the Vestry budget for the signage? It was suggested that the parking be done first and then the signage be placed under the project.

#### Long Range Planning

- Painting of the interior of the church can be moved up another year.
- Place on hold the hiring the Sexton for 20 hours per week.
- Place on hold the vinyl on the exterior of the church.
- Place on hold Bliss hall renovations.
- Purchasing of the property on Powell Street is not viable. The Living River Church is now renting the property.



It is very important that Saint James provides parking for their parish members. Parking on our property should accommodate 40 – 50 spaces. If the city would trim back the trees and shrubs on Powell Street, people will be able to park there as well.

**D. Property Search, Earl Miller & Bill Chase**

Bill reported that there are lots of properties available in various sizes, price range and locations. The question is can the current church be sold. Father Farrell responded that he contacted the Diocese. The Diocesan attorney informed Father Farrell that the rider on our deed--requiring us to obtain the Roarke Family's permission to sell the property and requires that we only sell the property to another church--applies to the deed in perpetuity and church policy does not allow for leasing the church. An Episcopal Church building no longer in use as an Episcopal Church must be de-consecrated before being sold or destroyed. There is also the issue of the church cemetery.

Based on that information, selling or leasing of Saint James the Fisherman is not a possibility. Therefore, parking availability for parish members is of prime importance and should move forward.

**E. Voting at Annual Parish Meeting, Father Farrell**

The Vestry discussed ways to conduct the Annual Parish Meeting. Suggestions and ideas were presented. Voting cannot be done by absentee voting, must be in church or Zoom.

- Do the voting on Zoom and in church. People who do not have computers can come to church. Capacity in Bliss Hall at this time due to COVID is for thirty - six people and too difficult to accommodate people at six feet apart.
- Have people on line for the 9:00 Morning Service, then have the 10:15 church service and do a Zoom meeting at 11:00. The 10:15 church service members stay for the 11:00 Zoom meeting and the 9:00 Zoom members return for the 11:00 Zoom Annual Parrish Meeting.
- If the 10:15 service members can go home and watch the Zoom meeting.
- Could the meeting be held at City Park?

Father Farrell said that we need more thought and prayer on how to handle the Annual Parrish Meeting. He welcomes any suggestions and creative thinking on how to resolve this.

**F. Communication, Gary Freeman**

We can table this for now but do need to discuss at a later date. Right now, Saint James's on-line parish directory is not easy to access. Heather and Anne will investigate an alternative way to connect.

**9. Deacons and Liaison's Reports (as needed)**

**A. Deacon's Reports**

Deacon Jean said that Jean Gillette needs a ramp for her wheelchair. Deacon Jean is asking for volunteers to help in building the ramp. The cost for the ramp is between \$800 – \$1,000 and donations can be made to the Outreach Programs. Father Farrell suggested placing the request for donations and volunteers in the church bulletin. Tom, Ron and Bill volunteered to help.

**B. C. D. E. Reports**

There is nothing to report from Program Liaison, Worship Liaison, Outreach Liaison and Communication Liaison.

**F. Stewardship Liaison's Report, Bob Lynott**

Bob will make another attempt to encourage pledges from the parish members at the Sunday Morning Prayer, contact individuals, email and phone calls. Ron Stephens volunteered to help him.

**G. Endowment Liaison's Report, Deacon Mike Ligon**

Deacon Mike reported on the Endowment Fund. The fund is currently at \$158,000 and has recovered. It made a gain of \$5,400.

Father Farrell thanked Deacon Mike for his work.

**10. Adjournment and Closing Prayer, Father Farrell**

Father Farrell provided a closing prayer and the Vestry meeting was adjourned at 6:45.

*Motion: Ron Stephens made a motion to adjourn the Vestry meeting, which was unanimously approved by the Vestry.*

*Next Vestry Meeting – Wednesday, November 18, 2020 at 4:00PM – Bliss Hall*

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Toni DeLuca, Vestry Clerk

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Ron Stephens, Senior Warden

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Date

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Date

